

SHADOW AND SUBSTANCE

by David Hargis

When Moshe (Moses) was instructed to build the Tabernacle and its furnishings, God told him to build it,.....

“After the pattern of the Tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so you shall make it” (Exodus 25:9).

The word pattern is *tabit* in Hebrew and means *form*, like a shadow of some substance. Moshe was not able to make exact replicas of heavenly things. Instead he made shadows, things that were the symbols of the heavenly substance he was shown. The implication is that Moshe (*Moses*) saw more than heaven’s furniture. He seems to have seen heavenly *principles*. These *principles* could not be replicated exactly on earth at that time, therefore, God commanded Moshe to reproduce them in a *type* as activities, buildings, and furnishings. The Tabernacle and Priesthood activities which Moshe received became the shadow or symbolism of heavenly things.

The Apostle Sha’ul (Paul), in writing to the Colossians, called these *forms*, “*the shadows of things to come*,” saying the substance of these things were to be demonstrated in Mashiach (Messiah) at His appearing (Col. 2:17). It is notable that Moshe made things which were *already* in place in heaven, and Sha’ul said those same things were *yet to come* (shadows of things to come). There is no contradiction here. This is the nature of the eternal. Eternal things are the substance because they are both the *basis* and the *goal* of the shadow. The testimony is that these heavenly things are eternal in the past and the future, but are invisible for us now in time, and that they require symbolism on earth to be understood by finite man.

Let it be established that when we talk of heavenly things we are speaking of the substance, and when we talk of earthly things, which point to the heavenly, we are speaking of the shadow. This may seem strange at first, because the heavenly things are invisible to us, and therefore seem much more “shadowy” or unreal. However, the heavenly things are eternal while the earthly things are temporary. Since the heavenly things are permanent, that qualifies them as being more real than earthly things. The shadows are those temporary things which give us a picture of what cannot be seen.

Israel’s ancient worship was based upon the shadow of heaven’s substance. One must not be too quick to diminish the importance of that shadow. After all, a shadow is evidence of substance (i.e., Heb. 11:1). Without a shadow there is no substance in our world. Also, we know that a substance has no shadow only when there is no light. So, when Moshe received the light of God from heaven, it was evidenced by the appearing of the shadow of heaven’s substance. If Moshe had not received the shadow there would not have been evidence that the true Divine substance existed.

The shadow of heaven’s substance is very important, for there is yet substance to be revealed and the shadow is our only clue of it. So, even after Yashua (Jesus) HaMashiach (the Messiah) had come, it was Sha’ul’s (Paul’s) testimony that Moshe’s revelations remained a shadow of things not yet revealed. For this reason the Torah (not law, but Instruction) Moshe was given remains a necessity, and it is probably why we see the saints singing “*the song of Moshe and the Lamb*” at the consummation of all things (Rev. 15:3).

Some believers ignore or discount Hebrew Scriptures (“Old Testament”) types. In essence, this is equal to being afraid of one’s own shadow. If you believe the Messiah to be the substance, you must admit He is not here with us NOW, but rather He is in heaven. [please note: the term “old testament” occurs only once in all of Scripture II Cor. 3:14]. Therefore, we have no real substance of heaven with us. Only the symbols and reports written in His Word are with us. The shadows have been given to help us connect with the unseen things of heaven. If we cast them away, we cast away our link with the heavenly.

There is a form of darkness upon us now. We cannot experience either the substance or the shadow, in reality, because Messiah is not visible and no Temple exists. If the shadow returns, then we know light has come and the substance is near. When Messiah comes again, the substance and the shadow will be together. *“The Lord, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple”* (Malachi 3:1). Then, at that time only, will the full light of day be upon us.

The Prophet Ezekiel reminds us that a new day is coming when the substance and shadow will be together. He reports that a Temple will be built in Jerusalem in which the Prince of God will literally dwelt and rule from a throne in the Holy of Holies. There has never been a Temple in Israel like the one Ezekiel reports. The dimensions are different than any before it. It is much larger than the past two Temples. In addition, the Torah of the Priesthood is given additional charges which Moshe did not include, nor were they ever implemented in Israel (Ezekiel 40).

The Prophet Zacharyahu (Zechariah) foretells a time when every nation on Earth will be required to keep Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, during Messiah’s reign (Zech 14:16). This, of course, means a literal return to Moshe’s doctrine, not just for Jews but for all people. Therefore, the shadow will return and be seen along with the substance, which is Messiah. Once again, when the Morning Star appears all things are revealed together. When the substance of Messiah is plainly seen, His shadow will accompany Him.

So then, the shadows of Scripture remain very necessary as living truth which walks in lock step with the substance. A shadow could never contradict its substance. What is right for one is right for the other. What is evil for one is evil for the other. Why? Because the true and unchangeable God, as YAH (Yahveh) is, could not contradict Himself. He cannot help but create the shadow to follow the substance or instruct the substance to match the shadow. Otherwise, neither His physical or moral laws would be trustworthy, and His *instructions* (Torah) through His shadows would be meaningless.

I cannot emphasize enough the faithful unchangeable nature of the Almighty. Without complete faith that this attribute is in Him, there is no standard by which the will of God may be discerned. Moral confusion and decay then exists because there is doubt of God’s immutability and the permanence of His commandments. Many Christians and Jews who declare devotion to God are yet notorious for rationalizing His commandments from existence. Once this is done there is no road map (schoolmaster, instructor) for truth and *“every man does what is right in his own eyes.”* If a man accepts this state he is blind to the truth and the shadows or symbols cannot lead to the substance, because they are not accepted as permanent markers of Divine substance. When a person accepts the notion that God has changed His commandments (Torah), then that person cannot know for sure what is the will or plan of God. When a person no longer respects God’s permanent shadows, that person has no way of understanding the eternal unchangeable substance !!

If a person does not accept the fact that each Divine shadow has Divine substance and vice versa, then that person has a twisted view of God's will and plan, if any view at all. Whatever moral stand they take is temporary, for they cannot say for certain God will not change His mind again and again.

Ancient Israel performed a pattern, a type, a shadow. They were to wait for the substance, which is why Ya'akov (Jacob) said, "*I wait for your salvation (Yahshua), O YAH!*" (Genesis 449:18). If the substance comes and one does not recognize it, is it because one believes only in the shadow? Not necessarily. It may be because one does not understand or consider to what the shadow was pointing. Then, what if one misses the understanding of the substance? Ultimately, respect for the shadow will be lost, because the only Divine reason for the shadow is the substance. This very thing could have happened to many in ancient Israel who were not able to make a connection between the shadow and the substance when Yahshua (Jesus) was sent.

But, on the other hand what if someone accepts the substance but not the shadow? Then that person may accept something they do not understand completely, for God gave the shadow to explain the substance. This has happened to many Christians who confess acceptance of Yahshua (Jesus) as the substance, but then cast off the shadow as insignificant. By doing this they never learn the fullness of Yahshua. As a human "not yet glorified" we are perhaps, at this time, more able to grasp the meaning of the shadow (pointing to the substance) than being able to grasp the substance itself. Much like God showing Moshe only his back at Sinai — we can not comprehend the FULL truth in our fallen state.

The understanding of the shadow and the substance must agree. There is only one truth. This is a fact for Christians and Jews. Whatever we profess about God, we must profess that His plan requires intelligibility, permanence, and the understanding of the substance drawn from the shadow. God's symbols have continuity with His actions.

If for the sake of argument, we say that the sacrificial Passover Lamb is the primary shadow and the primary substance is Yahshua in His suffering, then generally speaking, the Jews historically have maintained the shadow and the Christians have maintained the substance. Neither would have the whole. Neither present religious system would be working from a basis of the union of shadow and substance. Neither system is ready for the Messiah to come. For when He comes He will surely call to account those who dis-owned either His shadow or His substance. There, before us, would be standing the shadow and the substance in person, the visible with the invisible, the Eternal One invading time, the heavenly come down to earth. What would we say?

My point is this: there is a continuity between the Old Covenant (Hebrew Scriptures) and the Renewed Covenant (New Testament) stories of salvation which makes one incomplete without the other. A close study of the Hebrew Scriptures (old Testament) reveals that its theme is one of salvation, not the salvation OF Israel, but rather the salvation IN Israel FOR all mankind. Israel's sacrificial system pointed the way to something more. The Renewed Covenant (new Testament) account is the logical continuation of the salvation story worked out on the basis of the stage set in the Hebrew Scriptures. My contention is that the Old Covenant and New Covenant are equal partners in God's salvation (Yahshua). The former (old) concentrates on the shadow of salvation from sin and the latter (renewed) on the substance of salvation from sin. Israel is the scene for the entire play. One might say they the Old and Renewed Covenants are the required

Two-Witnesses necessary for establishing Truth.

All modern Jews must consider that it was devout Jews who witnessed and wrote the Renewed Covenant (new Testament). It was Jews who understood the shadow of the Tabernacle; who interpreted from the Hebrew Scriptures what kind of sacrifice for sin God wanted and provided. It was Jewish thought which declared that Israel's religion was a shadow which would be revealed in their Messiah. It was Jews who decided, accepted, and proclaimed that Yahshua (Jesus) performed the substantive acts of which Israel's symbolic acts constantly spoke. It was Jewish prophets who declared that God wanted something more to be done than shedding the blood of bulls and goats. Isn't it paradoxical that God says that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, then also says He does not desire the blood of bulls and goats?! (Isaiah 1:11). Does this not testify that another kind of sacrifice is absolutely required for sins to be forgiven?!

All modern Christians must consider the same and this also: Without the Jewish people, there would have not been Yahshua (Jesus). Without the Tabernacle or Temple, *the works, death and resurrection of Yahshua would be incomprehensible*. Christians must constantly consider that without remembrance of the shadow, the substance can drift into obscurity. Yahshua came in direct response to the connection He had with the shadow of the sacrificial system in Israel. The shadow is more than example, it is the explanation, the imparted value, purchased at the expense of Israel's sweat and blood. God pronounced the shadow as Holy (Leviticus and Romans 7:12) --- How could a Holy God *NOT* give Holy commands. That makes it more than a Sunday School illustration. The shadow is permanently God's Torah (instructions/law) and His own prophetic Voice.

It is precisely the unawareness there is of the connection between the shadow and the substance which has fostered anti-Semitism. The dividing of the shadow from substance results in warfare ("What God has joined together, let no man put asunder," Matthew 19:6) --- this also relates to marriage, where the shadow is the man and woman but the substance is the marriage of the Son to the Bride. By diminishing the importance of the shadow one diminishes the history and place of Israel. When one hates the Jews, one hates the things *they* were created to perform, and vice versa. So, because of Christian attempts to discard the shadow and Jewish attempts to discount the substance, the inevitable yet inexcusable fruit is mistrust and jealousy which leads to hatred and harm.

By abandoning respect for the Torah (the shadow of Instructions for living in the Kingdom, given through Moshe), many Christians have come to misunderstand the role of the Jewish people in the death of Yahshua (Jesus). The sin of anti-Semitism rose from this. On the other hand, by not accepting Yahshua as the substantive Messiah, many Jews lost touch with the reason for the sacrificial system. Once removed from the land and the Temple, Jews were left without the knowledge of God's requirement of blood sacrifice for sin. Therefore, no remission was available to them. Because shadow and substance were not unified, sin and apostasy increased in both camps.

Today, we are left with polite civility between Christians and Jews, but little else. In my view, it is because generally neither camp truly understands what God was saying in His symbols, and how they were to be played out in substance. I submit that a misunderstanding by both Christians and Jews of both Passover and the event's surrounding Yahshua's suffering, is a major cause of historical anti-Semitism.